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ABSTRACT

This document summarizes the contents of two comprehensive reports, "Review of Related Research" and "Survey of Beginning Teachers and Their Employing Public Schools." Three types of studies were examined in reviewing literature on research about the needs of first-year teachers: (1) "Teacher Reflections," demonstrating through first hand accounts the realities beginning teachers encounter during the induction years; (2) "Descriptive Surveys," establishing the general nature and type of problems and concerns shared by first-year teachers, as well as their perceived needs for support and assistance; and (3) "Psychosocial Research," exploring the personal and exploring the personal and professional dynamics at play within and without the school environment during the first teaching year. Relevant literature on support for beginning teachers is also summarized. This encompasses studies dealing with problems of beginning teachers, descriptions of support practices, and evaluation of induction programs. The second section of this report summarizes findings of surveys of beginning teachers and their employers, and includes findings from teacher and administrator questionnaires, comparison of responses from beginning teachers, experienced teachers and administrators, and surveys on the efficacy of teacher education programs. (JD)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF

STUDY ON NEEDS OF BEGINNING TEACHERS

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Teacher Standards and Practices Commission
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December, 1984

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF STUDY ON NEEDS OF BEGINNING TEACHERS

Introduction

In January, 1984 the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission appointed Commissioners Pat Munkres, Harold Johnson, Etienne Tschanz and Lon Thomas to investigate the needs of beginning teachers. The committee designed a five-pronged approach to assessing the needs of beginning teachers:

1. With assistance from the Oregon Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, a review of literature was conducted to determine the needs of beginning teachers and to identify programs designed to increase the effectiveness of first-year teachers.

2. Each of the 17 members of the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission was asked to interview at least two beginning teachers; an interview guide was developed to assure that interviews were similar.

3. First- and second-year teachers from Oregon programs were contacted by questionnaires which asked about their preparation for teaching and their opinions on continuing education. The questionnaires were comparable to the interview guide.

4. A similar questionnaire was sent to personnel directors at school districts which employed these teachers.

5. A conference was held on October 12, 1984 to discuss the findings of these research efforts and to develop recommendations on improving the effectiveness of beginning teachers.

Format of the Report

Three reports have been prepared on findings of the study on needs of beginning teachers. This document, called an Executive Summary, summarizes the contents of the other two comprehensive reports, titled Review of Related Research and Survey of Beginning Teachers and Their Employing Public Schools. Copies of the Review are available from the Oregon Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Dr. Donald Leu, President, Portland State University, PO Box 751, Portland, OR 97207. Copies of the Survey are available from the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission, 730 12th Street SE, Salem, OR 97310-0320.

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Acknowledgements

The Teacher Standards and Practices Commission acknowledges with appreciation the assistance of the Oregon Association of Colleges for Teacher Education with the study of beginning teachers. The Review of Related Research was conducted by Dr. Betsy Clewett, University of Oregon, at the request of the Association.

Dr. James Wallace, Lewis and Clark College, and Mr. David Mesirow, Portland Public Schools, advised the committee on design of the study and analysis of the findings and assisted with the conference on October 12, 1984. Others who assisted with the conference included: Dr. Ardis Christensen, State Department of Education; Dr. Betsy Clewett; Dr. Randy Hitz, Southern Oregon State College; Mr. Harold Johnson; Mrs. Pat Munkres; Mr. Ray Talbert, State Department of Education; Mrs. Etienne Tschanz; Dr. Linda Tamura, Pacific University; Dr. Holly Zanville, Oregon State System of Higher Education; and thirty other teachers, administrators and teacher educators who participated. West Linn School District provided excellent facilities for the conference at Inza Wood Intermediate School in Wilsonville.

I. REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

The following is a summary of Dr. Betsy Clewett's review of research on needs of beginning teachers and programs to increase the effectiveness of first-year teachers. A consistency remarkable in educational research appears in the findings of studies investigating the difficulties first-year teachers' experiences. Several decades of research conducted in varied times and settings, as well as discussions about the nature of beginning teaching, identify a uniform pattern to professional induction. The collective findings of this research underscore the reality of a number of common problems encountered in the first year unique to the teaching profession.

Types of Studies on Needs of Beginning Teachers

Three types of studies comprise the relevant literature on the needs of first-year teachers. Teacher reflections demonstrate through firsthand accounts the realities beginning teachers encounter during the induction year. Descriptive surveys establish the general nature and type of problems and concerns shared by first-year teachers, as well as their perceived needs for support and assistance. Psychosocial research explores the personal and professional dynamics at play within and without the school environment during the first teaching year. See Table 1.

The major contribution of teacher reflections and related literature to understanding the concerns and needs of beginning teachers is threefold:

1. These studies provide a unique view of the ecological realities of the first professional year, and trace the features of schools and educational practice that seem to change or remain stable over time.

TABLE 1

TYPES OF STUDIES ON
NEEDS OF FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS

Types of Studies	Findings
1. Teacher reflections demonstrate through firsthand accounts the realities beginning teachers encounter during the induction year.	1. Common events reported as problematic to beginning teachers are both instructional and noninstructional, professional and personal. These difficulties appear to be perceived by first-year professionals as marked more intertwined during the initial weeks and months, gradually becoming less pronounced and more identifiable by the neophyte as the first teaching year progresses.
2. Descriptive surveys establish the general nature and type of problems and concerns of first-year teachers.	2. Despite agreement as to these general problems and concerns of first-year teachers, their support needs are situation-specific and individually defined. The intensity, duration, and degree to which problems impinge on success during the induction year varies according to personal and setting characteristics. (a) Beginning teachers report receiving little formal or informal support during the induction year; the informal support they do receive is perceived as more helpful than formal support. (b) Beginning teachers are not proactive in seeking assistance, and tend to be highly and conventionally self-critical. (c) Support during the first year of teaching, or lack thereof, contributes to, but does not determine decisions to continue in or leave the teaching profession.
3. Psychosocial research explores the personal and professional dynamics in play within and without the school environment during the first teaching year.	3. An important factor affecting success during the first year of teaching is the inductee's socialization to the teaching role and setting. This process is highly complex because the elements of formal and informal socialization to the teaching profession are deeply embedded in social norms which beginners acquire as learners in schools and throughout their training and induction. These norms appear to produce survival and self-oriented concerns during the first year of teaching that result in controlling behaviors and conventional beliefs. (a) Beginning teachers seldom feel prepared to deal with the various players and relationships in school settings. (b) Social norms, such as the isolation of the classroom teacher and teacher autonomy, may result in behaviors that further impinge on the beginning teacher's success (e.g., reluctance to seek assistance, tendency to be covert about learning about the teaching role/funcions). (c) Many first-year teachers regard problems as inevitable, instructive and actually beneficial. (d) Although beginning teachers claim to welcome assistance from others they also fear adjustments to their roles and functions which may suggest to others lesser competence, credibility or status than that of experienced teachers.

2. The descriptive nature of these reports provides a data base from which studies linking variables previously unrelated can be designed.

3. These narratives serve as a point of departure for more definitive research regarding the problems of first-year professional practice, and the process by which beginners' needs for assistance change with time and/or the provision of forms of support.

Descriptive research contributes to an understanding of the problems and support needs of first-year teachers in several ways:

1. While the attempt to determine the sources and solutions of beginners' difficulties stretched the scope of descriptive research to its methodological limits, expanding the purposes of these studies encouraged collection of a greater variety of information pertaining to the first professional year.

2. Clear demonstration of variation in beginners' concerns and support needs, coupled with some consistency in the nature and type of shared induction-year experiences, implies that no single and formalized orientation and support program promises to relieve their problems.

3. The conclusions of descriptive studies pertaining to the needs of first-year teachers emphasize the urgency of re-conceptualizing the professionalization of education. Reviewers of the literature frequently comment on the consistency of findings from study to study to accentuate the necessity for providing first-year teachers with assistance during the induction year.

Psychosocial research reports that an important factor affecting beginning teachers' induction into the teaching profession is socialization to the teaching role and setting. This socialization process is highly complex because of the multitude of interpersonal relationships developing within the professional setting.

Types of Studies on Support for First-Year Teachers

Three types of studies comprise the relevant literature on support for beginning teachers. Advocacy for reform and scholarly essays include those discussions of alternative approaches to ameliorating the problems of first-year professionals, sometimes drawing upon data from relevant research and theory regarding teaching and learning to identify the implications for pre- and in-service education. Descriptive studies describe present support practices and establish the degree of discrepancy between these and beginning teachers' support needs. Evaluations of induction programs clarify which practices have demonstrable worth and merit. See Table 2.

Scholarly essays and advocacy for reform contribute to the literature on professional induction by emphasizing the diversity in thinking about specific suggestions for reform and large-scale revision of normative educational policy and practice. There appears to be collective confusion among professionals with regard to the degree of preparedness elementary and secondary

TABLE 2

TYPES OF STUDIES ON
SUPPORT FOR FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS

Types of Studies	Findings
1. Scholarly essays incorporate data from relevant research with theory regarding teaching and learning to identify implications for pre- and in-service education.	1. These commentaries advocating reform of pre-service, orientation and in-service programs variously attribute responsibility for improvement of programs and practices to higher education, state departments of education, and schools and school districts. Suggested implications often result in proposals for large-scale reform of teacher education and induction practices, and are incorporated in the encompassing issue of professionalization of teaching.
2. Descriptive surveys establish the discrepancy between beginning teachers' support needs and present induction practice.	2. Formal support systems for induction assistance are virtually non-existent; where orientation and/or induction is planned and intact, the assistance seldom is based on, nor does it match, the concerns and needs of beginning teachers. (a) In-service provided by schools and/or districts is generally of an orientation nature, and is seldom designed to meet the information or support needs of beginning teachers. (b) In-service training during the induction year is regarded by beginners as detracting from the tasks of teaching and other time-consuming demands, except when structural arrangements are made for the beginning teacher. (c) In-service for beginning teachers does not demonstrate immediate effectiveness in improving teacher skills. (d) School personnel report offering more orientation and induction services than beginning teachers report receiving; what assistance is offered appears to be largely ceremonial and ritualistic. (e) Supervisors of beginning teachers tend to evaluate their competence more highly than do the beginners themselves; however, evaluations tend to be based on infrequent and brief observations of performance. Supervision per se is rare. (f) Difficulties during the induction year tend to be exacerbated by organizational structures that often assign larger groups of students, more difficult students, more teaching and noninstructional duties, and assignments unrelated to pre-service preparation to beginning teachers than to more experienced teachers.

(continued)

TABLE 2
(continued)

Types of Studies	Findings
3. Evaluation of pre-service, orientation, and induction programs present the range of alternatives employed to ameliorate the stress of beginning teaching, and clarify which practices have demonstrable worth and merit.	3. Systematic, comprehensive and long-range evaluations of induction programs are rare. (a) Induction programs initiated by higher education employ a clinical model of supervision and support, which is generated by both educational and pragmatic pressures; the latter produce program limitations, which derive from unclear policy for responsibility, authority and financing. (b) Induction programs mandated legislatively and administratively employ an apprenticeship model of evaluation, which responds to pragmatic pressures for improvement of teacher quality and a host of related activities; these programs clarify control, governance and funding, but generate concerns about sound educational practice in teacher education. (c) Evaluation of clinical and apprenticeship models is unsophisticated at present; given the differences in purposes, contents and configurations of these programs, comparative judgments of merit, utility and worth are unfounded.

teachers should bring to their first assignments, the attribution of responsibility for providing them with assistance, the form that assistance should take, and the preferred sequence and scope of change efforts. Nevertheless, a deliberative approach to improving teacher quality appears in this large and growing body of literature, as well as a shared concern for providing assistance to beginning teachers.

Literature describing the problems and support needs of beginners alludes to some suitable criteria for evaluating the content and format of effective orientation and induction practices. This research suggests that programs for beginners should provide timely and appropriate information and support as needed prior to and throughout the first teaching year. Both introductory and on-going programs should be based on the individual and setting specific requirements of first-year teachers, so to insure suitability and reception.

The involvement of higher education and agencies that govern educational practice in providing induction-year assistance is motivated by a shared concern for improvement of teacher quality, but is enacted in ways reflecting very different perspectives on how best to achieve it. Higher education's interest in improvement of practice appears in leadership for developing clinical models to support beginning teachers, whereas legislative and administrative interest in refining policy surfaces in programs based on apprenticeship models.

Summary and Conclusions on Review of Related Research

Several strands of studies related to beginning teaching are reviewed in the first section of Clewett's report on the problems and support needs of first-year professionals. Teacher reflections, descriptive studies, and psychosocial research collectively demonstrate the type of difficulties typically shared by entry-level teachers. Findings of these studies are summarized in Table 3.

The second section of Clewett's report emphasizes the literature supporting, in spirit or reality, the provision of assistance to entry-level teachers. Rather than focusing on the features of programs that deliver support to beginning teachers, an unrealistic objective complicated by a dearth of evaluative evidence or criteria with which to judge former or existing programs, the discussion focuses on the experiential outcomes of these activities. Findings of these studies are also summarized in Table 3.

The relationship between the research on beginners' problems and the recommended or enacted provisions of support for first-year teachers is presented in Table 4. As this table amply illustrates, different interpretations of the needs of beginning teachers produces conflicting and contradictory approaches to their resolution.

Emerging in Clewett's discussion was recognition that a complex array of policy and practices questions related to induction-year support have yet to be answered. The policy issues pertain to authority and responsibility, orchestration, and financing of first-year assistance. The practice issues awaiting resolution stem from differing contents and configurations of preparatory, induction, and in-service programs employed in assorted teaching settings, by and for various professionals in the field.

TABLE 3

SUMMARIZED FINDINGS IN THE RELATED LITERATURE
ON NEEDS OF FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS

Types of Studies	Findings
1. Problems and Concerns of Beginning Teachers	1. Collective findings of related studies indicate that beginning teachers' problems include: (a) classroom management and student discipline; (b) student motivation; (c) adjustment to the physical demands of teaching; (d) managing instructional demands of position (e.g., preparing and organizing work, individualizing assessment, instruction, and evaluation, locating materials and resources); (e) managing noninstructional demands of position (e.g., enlisting timely and appropriate assistance from school personnel, establishing relationships with students, parents, colleagues, managing extra-curricular assignments); (f) sacrifice of leisure time; and (g) justification of work demands to others outside the workplace.
2. Investigations of Support for Beginning Teachers	2. Beginning teachers' problems may be eased by: (a) increasing orientation and in-service practices; (b) reducing teaching and other instructional responsibilities; (c) providing supervision (in contrast to observation/evaluation); (d) increasing time for planning and organizing instruction; (e) providing opportunities to observe the teaching of more experienced colleagues in the teaching area; (f) assigning experienced teachers to provide inductees with various types of assistance and support; and (g) offering opportunities for beginning teachers to interact with one another.

TABLE 4

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESEARCH ON BEGINNING TEACHERS
AND RECOMMENDED OR ENACTED PROVISIONS FOR
SUPPORT OF FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS *

Contribution of Research on Needs of Beginning Teachers	Professional Organization	Teacher Educators	Legislated Reform	Descriptive Studies	IHE Initiated Evaluation	State-Mandated Evaluation
1. Teacher reflections demonstrate how early problems are unique outcomes of interaction between individual and setting characteristics. The difficulties beginners experience are extremely intertwined; as a result, first-year teachers report that distinguishing and addressing their problems is formidable without assistance.	Extended contact with training institution; in-service provided by school setting	Structural arrangements, job embedded supports, including: Reduced workload, released time, observations of experienced teachers. Research on phenomenology of beginning teachers	Make teacher competencies explicit, provide clear evaluation routinely and early	Planned orientation programs including information germane to particular setting--establish efficiency of setting to stabilize beginners' work environment	Job-embedded supports and structural arrangements for gradual assumption of teaching responsibilities; Early support for coping with classroom realities	Clear definition of role and functions
2. Descriptive studies demonstrate that many of beginners' problems are commonly experienced, but also are highly variable, situational, and individually defined. The confusion neophytes experience in identifying and remedying their difficulties is matched with a similar uncertainty about the helpfulness of the assistance they need and receive; their perceptions of the appropriateness and timeliness of support determine receptiveness to its provision, particularly with respect to fear of evaluation.	Reduce need for assistance and occurrence of problems with depth and breadth in preservice training	Mentor system independent of evaluation. Research on effects of differences in setting and support systems on beginning teaching; study of teacher characteristics and situational variables	Recruit/select the best and brightest Make expectations of beginners explicit	Evaluation by administrators to permit colleagues to provide non-threatening assistance	Extended supervision with training institution via clinical model: One-on-one observation/feedback; Academic coursework integrated with teaching to promote thoughts and practice	Extended evaluation via apprenticeship model: competencies provide explicit expectations periodic observation/feedback with regard to specific instructional skills

(Over)

TABLE 4
(Continued)

Contribution of Research on Needs of Beginning Teachers	Professional Organization	Teacher Educators	Legislated Reform	Descriptive Studies	IHE Initiated Evaluation	State-Mandated Evaluation
3. Psychosocial research demonstrates the ways in which teacher socialization influences the problems beginning teachers experience and provision of first-year support. These studies report that embedded social norms of the profession affect receptiveness to assistance, which weakens when supports are formalized. This research also suggests that the quality of assistance may be conventional when provided solely by school personnel.	Pre-service training that facilitates relationship building and capacity to assist with reform	Discussion with other beginning teachers, and with experienced teachers. Research on contents of workplaces; beginning teachers as developmental phenonema	Formalize assistance to establish new norms for interaction; provide staff training for serving as consultants	In-service and staff development activities for all teachers to integrate beginners	Support coordinated between university and school personnel. Increase amount of and familiarity with available resources	Involvement of staff in planning in-service programs; training for teachers serving as supervisors

*Note: Three types of studies on provisions for support of first-year teachers were identified in the literature: (1) advocacy for reform written by professional organizations and teacher educators or legislated by state and federal educational agencies; (2) descriptive studies characterizing induction practices and documenting needed improvements; and (3) models for programatic assistance and evaluation initiated by institutions of higher education (IHE) or mandated by state educational agencies or legislatures. In this table, the three types of studies on support of first-year teachers are summarized in relationship to the three studies on the needs of beginning teachers. The table illustrates that different interpretations of the needs of beginning teachers produce conflicting and contradictory approaches to their resolution.

Clewett concludes that a careful, studied approach to understanding the interaction between these policy and practice questions is needed to develop new ways of thinking about and responding to a clearly demonstrated problem in the profession. Caught between the completion of training and full certification, the first-year teacher's status is ambiguous, isolated from recognition of academic preparedness accorded by teacher educators, and the recognition of experiential preparedness withheld by practitioners. Provision of effective assistance during the transition period will remain inconsistent and irregular until the philosophical and pedagogical assumptions of the profession that contribute to ambiguity of a beginner's status are examined and re-defined.

II. RESPONSES FROM INTERVIEWS BY COMMISSIONERS

In April and May, 1984, Commissioners conducted approximately forty-five interviews with 1982 and 1983 graduates who were teaching in proximity to the Commissioners' homes. Interview guides assisted in gathering similar information from each beginning teacher. Most interviews were conducted at the teachers' schools.

Findings of these interviews were reported to the Commission at its May meeting. Commissioners stated that the teachers interviewed were candid in their evaluations of teacher education programs and school district programs of inservice education. Commissioners were favorably impressed with the quality of beginning teachers and reported that the teachers' employing principals also rated them highly.

Eighty-six percent of those interviewed stated that they were adequately prepared for their first teaching asignments. Fewer, however, felt adequately prepared to teach handicapped students or to teach such subjects as career education, consumer education and global studies (55% and 50% respectively).

Seventy percent of the beginning teachers had participated in inservice workshops or had completed additional college courses since completing their initial teacher preparation. More than two-thirds felt that additional preparation was necessary in classroom management and discipline and in further subject matter courses.

Only fourteen percent felt that additional preparation was needed in relating to faculty, school board members and parents. Forty-eight percent thought additional work in curriculum design and construction of instructional materials would be helpful.

Sixty-three percent of the interviewees reported that their preparation matched well the expectations of their teaching positions. Eighty-eight percent stated that the setting of their first teaching positions had contributed to their effectiveness as beginning teachers.

III. FINDINGS FROM THE TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRES

Questionnaires were mailed to 853 public school teachers who had completed teacher education programs at Oregon colleges and universities in 1981-83. A total of 3,396 persons had completed student teaching in this two-year period. Of that number, 2,760 applied for Oregon certification and 853 of

those certified were employed in Oregon public schools in September, 1983. Replies were received from beginning teachers and others as follows:

396	completed returns from teachers with four years of experience or less
88	completed returns from teachers with five to twenty years of experience
17	returned from school districts or post offices as undeliverable
10	received too late to include in tallies
TOTAL 511	(59.9 percent of those mailed)

The committee had not expected to receive completed questionnaires from experienced teachers. Some experienced teachers apparently had been registered for student teaching during the two-year period under study in order to qualify for additional subject matter or special education endorsements. Other experienced teachers may have been initially prepared out of state, but qualified for Oregon certification upon completion of additional student teaching at an Oregon college or university. Since 88 replies were received from experienced teachers the committee decided to report these data separately to permit contrasts with data from beginning teachers.

Over half of the respondents are employed in three population centers: 24 percent in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington Counties; 16 percent in Benton, Linn, Marion and Polk Counties; and 12 percent in Lane and Douglas Counties. The remaining 48 percent are distributed throughout Oregon with at least one respondent from each county.

Responses from beginning teachers were analyzed in two ways: by endorsement and by institution. To facilitate analysis, the 31 subject matter endorsements were grouped into eight categories: elementary, 25 percent of the replies; vocational, 10 percent; special education, 12 percent; language arts, 10 percent; physical education, 9 percent; social studies, 7 percent; sciences and mathematics, 12 percent; and special programs, 15 percent. Responses from beginning teachers were also analyzed by grouping them by the institutions which recommended the teachers for Basic Teaching Certificates: Eastern Oregon State College, 8 percent of the replies; Oregon State University, 20 percent; Portland State University, 9 percent; Southern Oregon State College, 11 percent; University of Oregon, 18 percent; Western Oregon State College, 23 percent; and independent colleges, 11 percent.

The rates of return of questionnaires for various groups ranged from 31 percent replying to 73 percent replying. While replies for beginning teachers averaged 46.4 percent, the percentages of returns varied as shown on the following page.

By Endorsement	Returns	By Institution	Returns
Special Programs	73.2%	OSU	62.7%
Social Studies	66.7	U of O	53.7
Language Arts	57.4	WOSC	48.4
PE and Health	56.5	SOSC	45.7
Vocational	55.6	IND.	42.9
Science and Math	46.1	EOSC	42.3
Elementary	36.3	PSU	31.4
Special Education	35.4		

Comments on Pre-service Preparation

More than 80% of the beginning teachers stated that their preparation matched "well" or "very well" the expectations of their first teaching positions. Responses from experienced educators were somewhat lower, with only 71% rating this match as "well or "very well." Graduates from independent colleges responded more positively than others; 95% said their preparation and the job expectations matched "well or "very well." Most beginning teachers (90%) reported that they were "adequately" or "very adequately" prepared for their first assignments. Responses from experienced teachers, however, were lower, with only 79% indicating that their preparation was "adequate" or "very adequate."

When asked about their preparation to teach handicapped students, beginning teachers were generally less positive than they were on other items on the questionnaire. Only 58% of the Oregon graduates rated themselves as "adequately" or "very adequately" prepared to teach handicapped students. Nevertheless, beginning teachers felt better equipped in this regard than did their colleagues who now have five to twenty years of experience. Less than one-third of the experienced teachers rated themselves as "adequately" or "very adequately" prepared for teaching the handicapped. Special education teachers viewed themselves better prepared in this regard. Nine out of ten of the special educators said they were "adequately" or "very adequately" prepared for teaching the handicapped.

Sixty percent of the beginning teachers felt "adequately" or "very adequately" prepared to instruct public school curriculum in such areas as career education, consumer education and global studies. Only one-half of the experienced teachers responded favorably regarding their preparation for teaching the public school curriculum.

Nine out of ten beginning teachers reported that they were "adequately" or "very adequately" prepared to teach the basic skills. Experienced teachers were similarly confident with 87% responding that their preparation had been sufficient.

Beginning teachers believe that they are well prepared in subject matter. More than 92% responded that their subject matter preparation had been "adequate" or "very adequate," compared to 90% of the experienced teachers who responded.

Teachers were asked what improvements in Oregon teacher education programs would make a significant difference in the effectiveness of beginning teachers. Six hundred and thirty-eight comments were written by beginning teachers. Most frequently mentioned (89 comments) was the need for more practica and student teaching. The second most frequent comment dealt with classroom management and record keeping (85 comments), followed by mention of discipline techniques (61 comments), more subject matter preparation for elementary teachers (60 comments), more variety in teaching skills and methods (47 comments) and accommodating to individual differences within the classroom (46 comments).

Experienced teachers wrote 126 comments, mentioning the need for more practica and student teaching most frequently (18 comments). Other areas frequently mentioned by experienced teachers included: accommodating to individual differences within the classroom (15 comments), classroom management and record keeping (12 comments), more subject matter preparation for elementary teachers (10 comments) and more discipline techniques (9 comments).

Comments on In-Service Preparation

In addition to questions about pre-service teacher preparation, the questionnaires asked about in-service requirements and programs. Fifty-two percent of the teachers reported that their districts required participation in an organized in-service program as a means of increasing their effectiveness in the classroom. Eighty percent of the beginning teachers and 87% of the experienced teachers rated in-service courses and workshops as "helpful" or "very helpful" as means of increasing their effectiveness as educators.

Eighty-seven percent of the beginning teachers and 82% of the experienced teachers rated additional college courses as "helpful" or "very helpful" in their continuing professional development. The type of endorsements held or the undergraduate institution attended did not significantly influence these ratings.

Beginning teachers were nearly equally divided on the question of whether local district in-service programs are more valuable than courses taken at a college or university as far as increasing effectiveness in the classroom is concerned. Ten percent of the beginning teachers said the district provided in-service was "much less valuable" than college courses, but an equal number said district in-service is "much more valuable." The remaining 80% were divided equally between "less valuable" and "more valuable." Experienced teacher responses were distributed in a similar manner.

On the question regarding additional preparation in the area of classroom management and discipline, beginning teachers and experienced teachers were nearly identical in their opinions. Ninety-five percent of the experienced teachers and 89% of the beginning teachers rated preparation in classroom management and discipline as "necessary" or "very necessary."

Over 84% of the beginning teachers stated that additional preparation in their subject matter fields is "necessary" or "very necessary" and a similar percentage of experienced teachers responded likewise.

Beginning teachers were asked about their need for additional preparation in relating personally to other faculty members, the school board and parents. Less than 62% of the beginning teachers felt a need for such preparation, but 80% of the experienced teachers thought such preparation would be "necessary" or "very necessary."

Eighty-two percent of the beginning teachers and 84% of the experienced teachers considered additional preparation in curriculum design and construction of instructional materials to be "necessary" or "very necessary."

Teachers were asked what improvements in local district support or in-service programs would have helped them to be more effective as first-year teachers. Two hundred twenty-eight comments were written by beginning teachers. Most frequently mentioned was the need for district staff development programs for beginning teachers (51 comments). Second most frequently mentioned was the need for districts to specify their personnel policies and performance standards (34 comments), followed by need for released time for professional development and for interchange among teachers (30 comments), need for district curriculum development to meet specific needs (26 comments), need for a system of mentors or master teachers (20 comments), workshops on discipline and classroom management (20 comments) and increasing communication within school buildings and departments regarding goals and resources (18 comments).

Experienced teachers wrote 56 comments, mentioning most frequently the need for a system of mentors or master teachers (14 comments). Second in frequency was mentioned the need for released time for professional development and for interchange among teachers (9 comments), followed by comments on specifying district policies and performance standards (7 comments). Six comments were written on each of the following: need for staff development programs for beginning teachers, need for district curriculum development to meet specific needs, and need for professional development in discipline and classroom management.

IV FINDINGS FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR QUESTIONNAIRES

Questionnaires were mailed to the 170 public school personnel directors who had employed the 853 public school teachers in the survey population. Questions were similar to the questionnaire addressed to beginning teachers to enable comparisons and contrasts. Responses were received from 128 districts (75% of those mailed). Respondents were asked to state their titles; returns were grouped for superintendents, personnel directors and principals. Approximately 60% of the respondents were superintendents, 25% were personnel directors, and 15% were principals.

Comments on Pre-Service Preparation

Administrators were asked how adequately prepared for their first educational assignments were the graduates from Oregon teacher education programs. Ninety percent of the respondents reported that beginning teachers were "adequately" or "very adequately" prepared for their first assignments.

In comparison to first-year teachers in their districts who were prepared out of state, graduates from Oregon teacher education programs were rated "about the same quality" by 73% of the administrators. Twenty-three percent of the administrators thought Oregon-prepared teachers are "somewhat more effective" or "definitely more effective" than those from other states. Only three administrators out of 122 reported that Oregon graduates are "somewhat less effective" and only one said that they are "definitely less effective" than out-of-state teachers.

More than two-thirds of the administrators stated that Oregon's beginning teachers are "adequately" or "very adequately" prepared for instructing the handicapped. Twenty-seven percent of the administrators said that beginning teachers were "inadequately" prepared for instructing the handicapped, and four percent rated them as "very inadequately" prepared. Principals, however, rated beginning teachers lower on this criterion than did personnel directors or superintendents. In fact three times as many principals rated beginning teachers as "inadequately" of "very inadequately" prepared for the handicapped as did personnel directors.

When asked about beginning teachers' preparation to instruct the public school curriculum in such areas as career education, consumer education and global studies, 74% of the administrators responded that beginning teachers are "adequately" or "very adequately" prepared. Eighty-eight percent of the administrators also rated beginning teachers as "adequately" or "very adequately" prepared to instruct in the area of basic skills (reading, writing, computing and speaking). With regard to preparation in the subject matter which they teach, 97% of the administrators reported such preparation as "adequate" or "very adequate."

In response to a question about what improvements in Oregon teacher education programs would make a significant difference in the effectiveness of beginning teachers, administrators wrote 187 comments. Most frequently mentioned was the need for more practica and student teaching (34 comments), followed by more variety in teaching skills and methods (21 comments), classroom management and record keeping (14 comments), broader preparation in their teaching field (13 comments), more depth in basic skills and general knowledge (13 comments) and accommodating to individual differences within the classroom (12 comments).

Comments on In-Service Preparation

Seventy-eight percent of the administrators reported that their districts require beginning teachers to take additional courses (other than those required by TSPC for continuing certification) as a means of increasing their effectiveness in the classroom. Only 10% of the respondents indicated that their districts provided time for professional growth activities, but 31% reported that their districts require beginning teachers to participate also in organized in-service programs (other than the statewide in-service day).

Asked about their reaction generally to in-service courses and workshops as the means for increasing the effectiveness of beginning teachers, 84% of the administrators stated that such experiences are "helpful" or "very helpful." Seventy-two percent of the administrators thought that additional college courses would also be "helpful" or "very helpful" in increasing the effectiveness of beginning teachers. However, 88% of the administrators stated that local district in-service programs are "more valuable" or "much more valuable" than college courses.

Ninety-four percent of the administrators rated additional preparation in classroom management and discipline as "necessary" or "very necessary," but only 74% ranked additional subject matter preparation as "necessary" or "very necessary." Principals' responses, however, on this item are higher than administrators in general, with 83% saying additional subject matter is necessary.

Seventy-three percent of the administrators reported that in-service education or additional college preparation is "necessary" or "very necessary" in the area of relating personally to other faculty members, school boards and parents. Principals rated this item higher than their counterparts, with over 95% stating that such additional preparation is necessary, as compared to 70% of the superintendents who responded similarly.

Over 80% of the administrators rated additional preparation in curriculum design and construction of instructional materials as "necessary" or "very necessary."

Administrators were also asked what improvements in local district support or in-service programs would help first-year teachers to be more effective. Seventy-three comments were written. Most frequently mentioned was the need for a system of mentors or master teachers (12 comments), followed by the need for administrative support for professional development programs (11 comments). Other comments included: providing released time for professional development or for interchange among teachers (9 comments), training in ITIP procedures (7 comments) and need to specify district policies and performance standards (6 comments).

V. COMPARISON OF RESPONSES FROM BEGINNING TEACHERS, EXPERIENCED TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Fifteen questions were worded similarly for all respondents. Comparisons of responses to those questions from beginning teachers, experienced teachers and administrators are presented as graphs in Tables 5, 6 and 7.

Administrators and teachers were in agreement about the quality of preparation which beginning teachers received for their first assignments. In regard to teaching the handicapped and to teaching career education, consumer education and global studies, administrators rated the teachers' preparation more highly than did the teachers. Nearly all teachers and administrators rated preparation in basic skills and subject matter as "adequate" or "very adequate."

All respondents agreed that additional preparation is needed in classroom management and, to a lesser degree, in curriculum design and preparation of instructional materials. All concurred that additional preparation is beneficial in increasing the effectiveness of beginning teachers.

Beginning and experienced teachers reported that they need additional subject matter preparation more frequently than did administrators. Administrators and experienced teachers felt that additional preparation in relating to faculty, boards and parents would be beneficial more often than did beginning teachers.

Finally, teachers prefer additional college courses to increase their effectiveness, whereas administrators reported that local district sponsored in-service is more beneficial in increasing a teacher's effectiveness.

TABLE 5

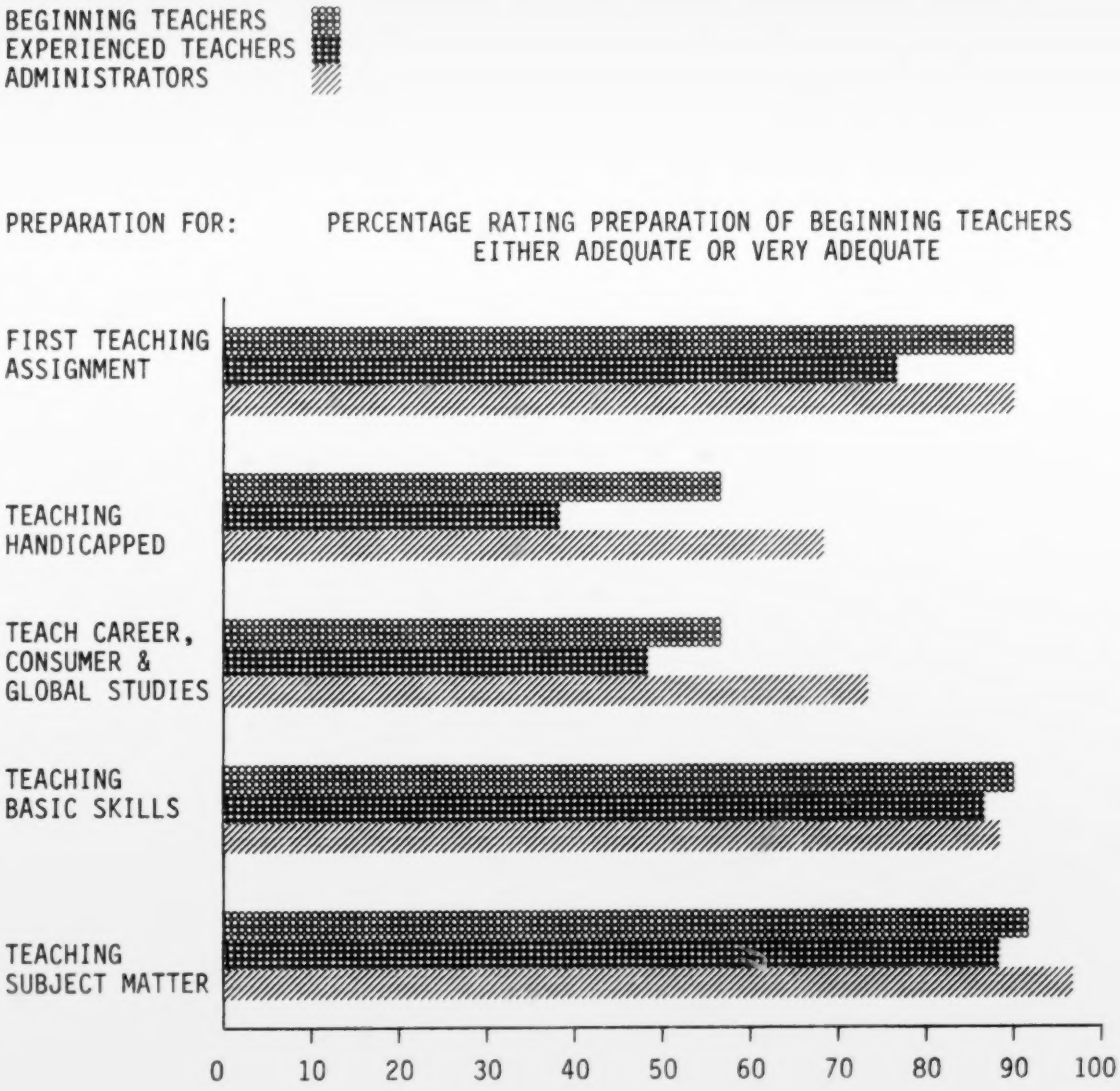

BEGINNING TEACHERS
EXPERIENCED TEACHERS
ADMINISTRATORS
PREPARATION FOR:
PERCENTAGE RATING PREPARATION OF BEGINNING TEACHERS EITHER ADEQUATE OR VERY ADEQUATE
FIRST TEACHING ASSIGNMENT
TEACHING HANDICAPPED
TEACH CAREER, CONSUMER & GLOBAL STUDIES
TEACHING BASIC SKILLS
TEACHING SUBJECT MATTER
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
100

TABLE 6

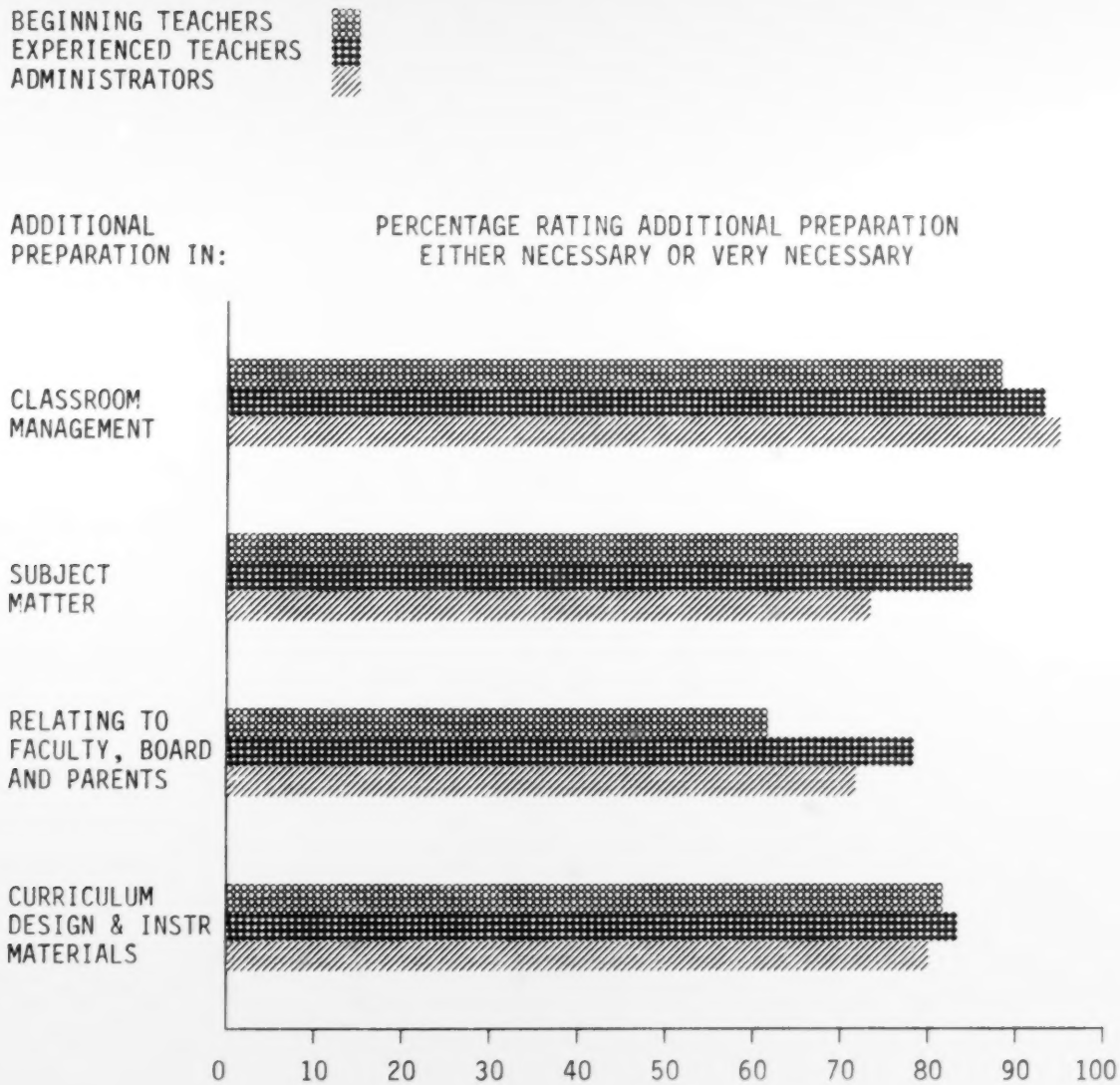
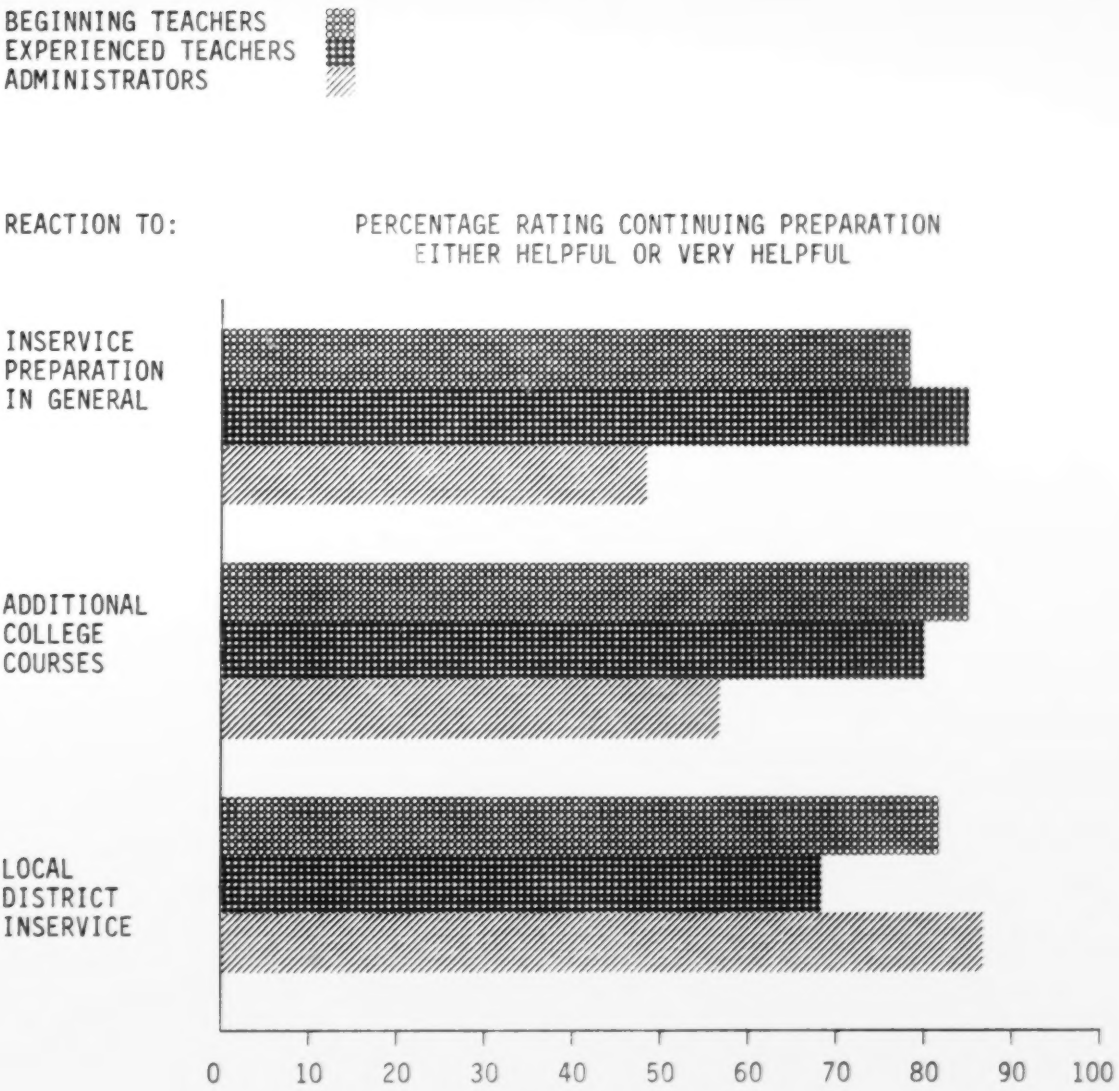

BEGINNING TEACHERS
EXPERIENCED TEACHERS
ADMINISTRATORS
ADDITIONAL PREPARATION IN:
PERCENTAGE RATING ADDITIONAL PREPARATION EITHER NECESSARY OR VERY NECESSARY
CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT
SUBJECT MATTER
RELATING TO FACULTY, BOARD AND PARENTS
CURRICULUM DESIGN & INSTR MATERIALS
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
100

TABLE 7


BEGINNING TEACHERS
EXPERIENCED TEACHERS
ADMINISTRATORS
REACTION TO:
PERCENTAGE RATING CONTINUING PREPARATION
EITHER HELPFUL OR VERY HELPFUL
INSERVICE PREPARATION IN GENERAL
ADDITIONAL COLLEGE COURSES
LOCAL DISTRICT INSERVICE
0
10
20
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40
50
60
70
80
90
100

VI. CONFERENCE ON NEEDS OF BEGINNING TEACHERS

On October 12, 1984 the Committee on Needs of Beginning Teachers invited a group of teachers, administrators and teacher educators to analyze and discuss the findings of the literature review, the interviews and the questionnaires. Over thirty persons attended the conference at Inza Wood Intermediate School in Wilsonville.

The conference schedule consisted of three segments. In the first segment, issues surrounding preparation in methods of teaching and other professional matters were presented and discussed. The second segment focused on the ability of beginning teachers to teach the public school curriculum. The third segment dealt with the conditions in public schools under which first-year teachers are employed.

After each discussion session, individuals were asked to complete reaction forms stating their personal views on increasing the effectiveness of beginning teachers. Participants were also asked if they concurred with the Committee's summary of findings of the interviews and questionnaires. In addition, the participants wrote recommendations directed to: the colleges and universities which prepare teachers, the school districts which employ beginning teachers and the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission which certifies teachers.

The Committee summarized the reaction sheets while the next segment of the conference continued. Later in the day, photocopies of the summaries were distributed and conference participants were asked to assist in ranking the summarized recommendations in order of importance.

Following the conference, the original text of all recommendations was duplicated and mailed to participants together with the summaries and rankings prepared during the conference. Participants were again asked to respond in writing regarding the recommendations which had been compiled during the conference.

The procedures used at the conference did not entirely satisfy some participants because the full range of data generated on October 12 is not represented in the final recommendations. The summaries of the three conference segments do, however, provide some recurring recommendations which are illustrative of the discussion sessions.

Professional Preparation

The first reaction form asked participants if they concurred with the Committee's summary of findings on professional preparation. Twenty-two persons (88% of the 25 persons responding to the question) stated that the following is an appropriate summary:

> In regard to the professional preparation which teachers receive, the beginning teacher study revealed that most teachers and administrators consider Oregon pre-service programs to be satisfactory. However, more preparation is recommended in: teaching the handicapped, classroom management, discipline, curriculum design and construction of instructional materials. Additional field experiences and/or extended supervised teaching are also needed.

Participants made 155 recommendations based upon the findings and their personal experiences with beginning teachers. Recommendations which were most frequently mentioned also tended to be rated by participants as being of greater importance in improving the effectiveness of beginning teachers. The following recommendations on professional preparation were made by one-third or more of the participants and are ranked from the highest to lowest frequency of comment:

Colleges and Universities Preparing Teachers

1. Colleges of Education and School Districts should cooperate in courses on methods of teaching, classroom management and organization and student discipline.

2. Prospective teachers should spend more time in classrooms prior to certification.

3. Internships should be required following a full liberal arts education.

4. Beginning teachers need increased training in "people skills" --student differences, motivation of students, dealing with prospective dropouts, etc.

5. Teacher education faculty should be more involved with school districts.

Recommendations for School Districts

1. Districts need a planned support system for beginning teachers such as: mentors encouraged, in-service program on regular basis, opportunities for interaction between beginning teachers, counseling of beginning teachers, coaching of beginning teachers, and observation of master teachers.

2. Avoid overloading beginning teachers with less desirable assignments and students or extra curricular responsibilities.

3. Avoid assigning beginning teachers in areas where they have limited academic preparation.

Recommendations for TSPC

1. Provide means for linkages between districts and higher education.

2. Maintain approved programs as a requirement for certification and resist efforts to bring in noncertified personnel.

Teaching the Public School Curriculum

The second reaction form asked if participants concurred with the summary of findings on the following page.

> The subject matter preparation that beginning teachers receive is adequate for their assignments, including instructing students in the basic skills of reading, writing, computing and speaking. Nevertheless nearly all teachers and most administrators feel that further subject matter preparation is necessary.

Seventeen persons (81% of the 21 persons responding to the question) stated that the summary is appropriate.

Participants wrote 99 recommendations on preparation for teaching the public school curriculum. The following recommendations were made by one-third or more of the participants and are ranked from the highest to lowest frequency of comment:

Colleges and Universities Preparing Teachers

1. Involve experienced teachers as resource persons in methods courses.
2. Relate college subject matter to public school curriculum and field experiences.
3. Increase subject matter preparation for elementary teachers (especially math, science and grammar).
4. Make methods courses more specific and include planning of curriculum in the area of teaching (scope and sequence, etc.).

Recommendations for School Districts

1. Provide released time for beginning teachers to observe master teachers.
2. Provide time for principals and experienced teachers to be mentors.
3. Form support groups to share ideas and materials (e.g., grade level).
4. Find out instructional needs of beginning teachers and provide appropriate instruction.

Recommendations for TSPC

1. Sponsor meetings bringing colleges and district personnel together for exchange of ideas and expectations.
2. Continue to gather information about needs of beginning teachers, especially in specific areas, like science.

Conditions for First-Year Teachers

The third reaction form asked if the Committee's summary on conditions for first-year teachers was appropriate. Seventeen persons (85% of the 20 persons responding to the question) stated that they concurred with the summary on the following page.

Beginning teachers stated that their preparation matched well the expectations of their first positions and that the settings of these positions contributed significantly to their success in teaching. But the efforts of districts to increase teachers' effectiveness through in-service fall short of that goal.

Participants wrote 48 recommendations on conditions for first-year teachers. The following recommendations were made by one-third or more of the participants and are ranked from the highest to lowest frequency of comments:

Colleges and Universities Preparing Teachers

1. Provide more observations of professional teachers in the classroom to learn approaches of classroom management.

2. Professors should visit first-year teachers--interview them regarding "fit" between training and job.

3. Invite district administration to campus to serve as guest speakers, team members, and for discussion of evaluation techniques, etc.

Recommendations for School Districts

1. Be sure that beginning teachers have the greatest opportunity for success; immediate access to resources for teachers; fair share of all the students (talented and less talented).

2. Provide released time for seminars, mentoring and evaluation.

3. Develop a plan for building and district orientation that will identify and address needs of new teachers.

4. Designate a teacher to help first-year teacher with qustions and problems.

Recommendations for TSPC

1. Continue to collect data on needs of beginning teachers.

VII. CONCLUSIONS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee on Needs of Beginning Teachers set out to find how graduates of Oregon colleges and universities felt about their preparation for teaching and to inquire how the graduates' employing schools rated them as begining teachers. Data were considered from professional literature, interviews, questionnaires and professional discussions on October 12, 1984.

Based upon these data certain general conclusions have been reached:

1. Oregon graduates are not unique in the problems of induction to teaching. National and international studies have documented that issues similar to those reported in this study emerge whenever beginning teachers are consulted.

2. Problems surrounding induction to teaching may be better analyzed and corrected if they are separated into "policy" and "practice" issues.

3. Graduates of Oregon colleges and universities are generally pleased with their preparation for teaching. They rate themselves as better prepared in all areas questioned than did experienced teachers. They also reported their needs for additional preparation in the areas questioned to be fewer than did experienced teachers.

4. Public school administrators are generally satisfied with the preparation of Oregon graduates. Graduates are adequately prepared for their assignments and the subjects they teach. Administrators stated that Oregon graduates compare favorably to teachers from other states.

5. Beginning teachers' perceptions of their needs for continuing professional preparation parallel closely administrators' perceptions of those same needs. But opinions of teachers and administrators differ significantly on the best means for meeting the identified needs. Teachers favor additional college courses, but administrators rank district sponsored in-service higher.

A number of questions emerged in the course of the study which cannot be answered by the data assembled. These include:

1. Public schools nationally have been recently criticized as being of poor quality. Are teacher education programs that prepare graduates for these schools adequate for the future needs of society? Are Oregon public schools and Oregon teacher education programs better than those in other states in this regard?

2. Why does one teacher in five in vocational, language arts, health, physical education, science and mathematics report that the settings of their first teaching positions detracted some or detracted greatly from their effectiveness as beginning teachers?

3. Are the differences in quality of preparation reported by beginning teachers as compared to experienced teachers a result of improvements in Oregon programs in recent years? Or are today's graduates less critical of their education than were graduates in the 1970's?

4. Why do beginning teachers report that their preparation was "adequate" or "very adequate" when 40% stated that their preparation to instruct the handicapped had been "inadequate" or "very inadequate"? A similar question could be posed regarding preparation to teach the public school curriculum in areas such as career education, consumer education and global studies.

5. What are the specific needs of beginning teachers with regard to teaching handicapped students? Is more instruction necessary in assessment of students and developing IEP's or is more field experience needed in working with handicapped students?

6. What specific experiences are being requested by recommendations for more practica, extended student teaching or year-long internships? Oregon colleges and universities have in recent years significantly increased the amount of field experience which they require prior to student teaching. Could existing opportunities for working with elementary and secondary students be improved to meet the needs reported, or must new and different practicum, internship or residency programs be developed?

The following recommendations are based upon the findings of the Beginning Teacher Study. They take into consideration the conclusions and remaining questions stated above. The recommendations are brief to focus attention on issues upon which the conference participants and respondents to questionnaires exhibited a high degree of concensus. These issues were identified by conference participants as important elements in increasing the effectiveness of beginning teachers.

A draft of these recommendations was circulated to the conference participants to see if they concurred that the proposed recommendations were adequate and appropriate. Thirteen replies were received; of these replies, three suggested editorial changes which were incorporated into the final draft.

It is recognized that other organizations and agencies have an interest in, and perhaps a responsibility for, improving the effectiveness of teachers. The State Department of Education, teachers' organizations and the Oregon Legislature, to name a few, have the capacity to affect the conditions under which beginning teachers are prepared and employed. No recommendations are made, however, for these organizations or agencies. Instead, the recommendations are directed to the three primary institutions involved in the preparation and employment of beginning teachers.

These recommendations are within current scopes of responsibility of the institutions listed. It is believed that most of these recommendations could be implemented within currently available resources.

The Committee on Beginning Teachers recommends that:

TSPC Should

1. Promote linkages between colleges of education and public schools through a variety of means.

2. Pay particular attention to the proper assignment of beginning teachers.

3. Continue to study the needs of beginning teachers.

Colleges of Education Should

1. Increase their collaboration with school districts in the design and delivery of general professional education courses and especially of methods courses in subject matter.

2. Provide greater assistance for beginning teachers in adapting subject matter content to the public school curriculum.

3. Improve, and if necessary increase, practicum experiences and student teaching, planning jointly with school districts and using evaluation procedures compatible with district evaluations of probationary teachers.

4. Follow-up beginning teachers in the field and cooperate with employing districts in assisting beginning teachers to become more effective.

School Districts Should

1. Create a school climate in which beginning teachers can become effective, giving attention to such conditions as assignment of classes, assignment of students to classes, assignment of extra duties, access for instructional materials, and access to district resources for professional development.

2. Establish a system to assist first-year teachers, including such supports as: expanding orientation to the district's goals and curriculum scope and sequence, forming mentor relationships with outstanding teachers, providing opportunities to observe other teachers within the district, and offering seminars on common problems or questions.

3. Determine the specific professional growth needs of their beginning teachers and design professional growth opportunities to meet these needs.